

December 5, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: COVID-19 Response Package and CARES Act Success Stories

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy,

On behalf of the International City/County Management Association's 13,000 members, the city and county managers on the front lines who work with our state and federal partners to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, I am writing to urge you to act expeditiously and provide local governments direct, flexible funding. Communities across the country require additional support to continue combating this public health and economic crisis, prepare for the upcoming vaccine distribution program, and avoid widespread layoffs and service reductions.

Federal funding through the CARES Act was an important first step for cities and counties across the nation in addressing unprecedented challenges brought on by the pandemic, but further assistance is needed to combat this ongoing public health crisis. We urge you to include the following elements in the next COVID-19 response package:

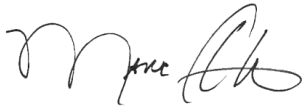
1. **Ensure funding is flexible.** In addition to keeping essential services running, cities and counties are facing unprecedented revenue shortfalls and are struggling to balance their budgets.
2. **Shift to a formula-based distribution model.** A formula-based distribution model would enable more cities and counties across the country to access the funding they need more quickly.
3. **Extend the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) deadline.** Many cities and counties are still allocating and spending CARES Act funding and need additional time to do so.

Our members have seen the positive impact of federal aid first-hand in their communities. In Dubuque, Iowa, for example, the number of individuals needing food assistance grew from 8,500 pre-pandemic to 13,455 in October. Thanks to CARES Act funding, city leaders were able to implement a program that provided free healthy meals to approximately 2,210 low- and moderate-income community members in just the first six weeks. That money has now run out even as the number of individuals experiencing food insecurity has grown.

Clear Creek County in Colorado was ranked the 13th most economically impacted county in the country by *USA Today* due to its reliance on seasonal tourism but did not receive direct CARES Act funding because of its small population. With an allocation from the state of Colorado, the county was able to provide grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$20,000 to small, owner-operated businesses that contribute to the local economy.

I urge you to expeditiously extend additional support to local governments so that our nation's cities and counties can continue to provide essential public health and safety services, especially as we face another surge in hospitalizations just as we plan for vaccine distribution. We thank you for all that you have done to help our communities respond to and recover from this ongoing crisis.

Thank you for your consideration.



Marc A. Ott, ICMA-CM
Executive Director
International City/County Management Association



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